

Vapor Intrusion in Greenpoint / E.
Williamsburg (Brooklyn) NY
Lessons learned & environmental injustice

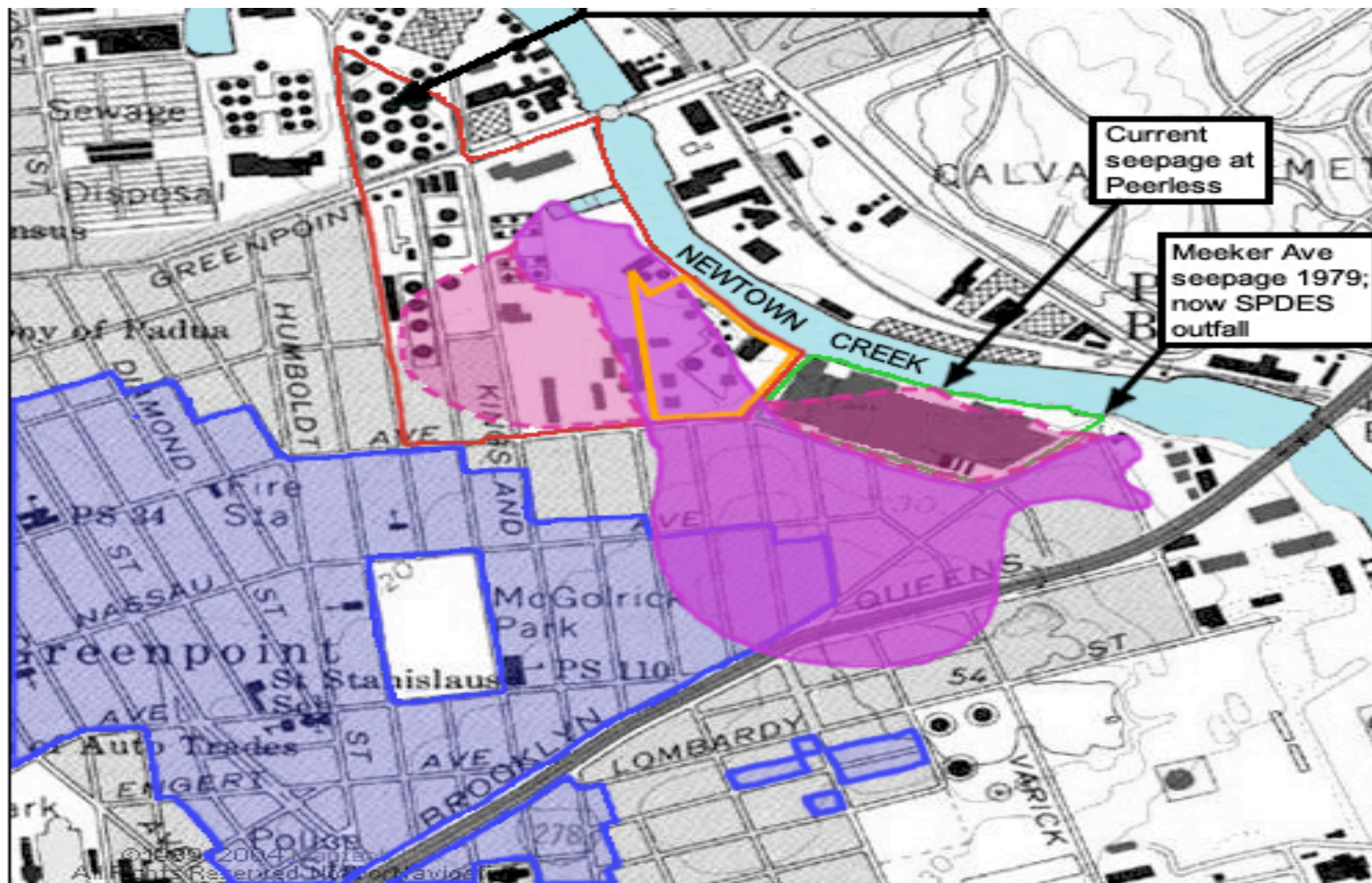
Mike Schade

*Center for Health,
Environment and
Justice*

www.chej.org

Background on Community

- | Greenpoint / E. Williamsburg neighborhood - Brooklyn, NY
- | Primarily Polish families - many fairly recent immigrants.
- | Gentrification issues.
- | Housing density - many 3 story buildings, 1-3 families.
- | Industrial legacy -- “Overburdened community”:
 - Sewage treatment plant
 - Waste transfer stations
 - State Superfund sites
 - TRI air polluters
 - Incinerator shut down
 - Contaminated Newtown Creek (by 1870 over 50 refineries were located along the banks of Newtown Creek) - federal Superfund?
 - Legacy of oil refineries:
 - | Massive oil spill (17 million gallons)



- Current Peerless Importers, former Texaco Terminal
- Historic Standard Oil Property
- Nearby residential areas
- Amoco property boundaries
- Newtown Creek

- 2003 mapping of spill's combined outline, according to ExxonMobil
- Estimated potential additional spill areas (dotted border)

Summary of Testing to Date

- | Four rounds of investigations - PCE and TCE primary chemicals of concern in Meeker Ave Plumes.
- | PCE and TCE Found in groundwater, soil vapor and soil.
- | Indoor air - 12 homes tested out of 58 in a target area.
- | 10 homes - received “mitigate” recommendation.
- | Only one residence has received “sub-slab depressurization system”

Vapor Intrusion Test Results

- | PCE in sub-slab samples - 51 ug/m³ to 70,000 ug/m³.
- | PCE in indoor air - .73 ug/m³ to 12 ug/m³.
- | TCE in sub-slab - 1.2 ug/m³ to 3m300 ug/m³.
- | TCE in indoor air - ND to 13 ug/m³.
- | 1,1,1-TCA in sub-slab - 2.6 ug/m³ to 580 ug/m³.
- | 1,1,1-TCA in indoor air - ND to 1.4 ug/m³.
- | Freons in sub-slab - ND to 18,000 ug/m³
- | Freons in indoor air - .49ug/m³ to 11 ug/m³.

Note - ug/m³ = micrograms per cubic meter. I did not use the proper “micrograms” symbol.

Challenges

- | NYS weaker TCE/PCE standards than other states/regional EPA's.
- | TCE - NYS air guideline for TCE - 5.0 ug/m³ compared TCE air guidelines developed by California, Colorado, New Jersey and several EPA regional offices - range from 0.016 to 0.02
- | PCE - NYS guideline of 100 ug/m³. DOH's PCE-in-indoor-air guideline is 250 times higher than U.S. EPA's Regional Screening Level of .41 ug/m³
- | DEC / DOH - not enough community outreach.
- | Community not well organized.
- | Residents not receptive enough to getting homes tested.
- | Property values concerns.
- | Cultural / language barriers.
- | Entire area is contaminated - why bother?

Recent Good News

- | DEC - Sites - “Class 2” State Superfund
- | DEC - More Vapor Intrusion testing planned
- | DEC - Creative community outreach
- | DEC - Door to door and phone outreach
- | Local / state policymakers on board in community outreach
- | DEC - Upcoming “public information session”

Tools from CHEJ

- | Organizing assistance
- | Technical assistance
- | Connect with national campaigns / report releases (I.e. forthcoming report on Superfund)
- | Lois Gibbs' new book - Achieving the Impossible

Most Requested Publications – CHEJ's Bakers Dozen

1. [Fight to Win: The Leadership Handbook](#)
2. [Community Health Surveys](#)
3. [How to Deal with a Proposed Facility](#)
4. [Best of the Organizing Toolbox](#)
5. [How to Win Public Hearings](#)
6. [Common Questions About Health Effects](#)
7. [Environmental Testing Guidebook](#)
8. [Local Ordinances Fact Pack](#)
9. [Property Values Fact Pack](#)
10. [Landfill Failures: The Buried Truth](#)
11. [Relocation: Getting Organized and Getting Out \(GO GO\)](#)
12. [Media Means](#)
13. [Users Guide to Lawyers Guidebook](#)

General Reading

[Love Canal: The Story Continues](#)
[Love Canal Guidebook](#)
[Everyone's Backyard](#)
[Dying From Dioxin](#)
[CHEJ's 25th Anniversary Issue of Everyone's Backyard, Spring 2006](#)

For a list of related articles available to Group Members, [click here](#).

Organizing

[Best of Organizing Toolbox](#)
[Best of Organizing Toolbox 1994-2000](#)

Contact Information

Mike Schade, PVC Campaign Coordinator
Center for Health, Environment and Justice
212.964.3680
Mike@chej.org

To Learn More:

Newtown Creek Alliance:

<http://www.newtowncreekalliance.org/meeker.htm>

Habitat Map: <http://habitatmap.org/markers?maps=123>

CHEJ organizing/technical assistance: www.chej.org